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## SOME VALUES OF DIAGNOSIS IN SPELLING

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**A**NALYSIS of mistakes is necessary if pupils are to be helped intelligently. This analysis may not be exhaustive but it provides a foundation on which to construct a scheme for the examination of poor spellers. Poor spelling may be due to one or another of quite different defects, or to a combination of several defects. The following are some of the possible causes of difficulty:

1. Faulty or slovenly pronunciation which is itself, due to various causes, as inability to articulate properly.
2. Hearing incorrectly, or false auditory perception.
3. Poor visual perception.
4. Failure to remember or retain impressions which were once clearly perceived.
5. Lack of knowledge of the meaning of the word. Also lack of familiarity with the word.

The types of errors which spring from the above causes are: (1) omission of letters or syllables; (2) transposition; (3) substitution; (4) addition; (5) repetition; (6) irregularities.

Teachers who have observed the kinds of errors children make in spelling have found these types the most common. A knowledge of the causes and types of errors will determine fundamentally our method of treat-

ment. A knowledge of the most common mistakes that children make will enable us to emphasize the vital parts of the word in correction, as also in teaching.

A diagnosis of the class as a whole serves as a basis for grouping the children, shows what children need drill, determines the word difficulty, serves as a stimulation, and sets up a goal for the individual.

The first step in the process of diagnosis is an Initial Test. The following sentences in a test were dictated to a class of A-5 pupils.

### DICTATION TEST IN SPELLING

GRADE A-5

1. The clerks offered the clothing for sale.
2. The engine struck several persons at the crossing.
3. Sometimes the view is very clear.
4. The chief of police is a friend of mine.
5. The newspaper offices were destroyed by fire.
6. My daughter is a beautiful girl.
7. Your answer failed to surprise me.
8. I have read the whole book since I saw you.
9. His loss was made known to me.
10. He himself entered by the rear door.

The italics are the test words.

A graph was made to show the number of words missed by each pupil. The graph individualized the pupil and enabled him to see himself in relation to the goal, and also in relation to the other pupils of the class. It was also an incentive to study.

Out of 250 attempts, 84 errors were made—43 omissions, 32 substitutions, 4 transpositions, 3 additions, and 2 due to illegible writing. This shows that the most common types of error in this class as a whole are due to omissions and substitutions.

The word difficulty is shown by Table I below. This table indicates the number of times each word was misspelled. By comparing these with the number of pupils (10) taking the test, we determine the relative difficulty of each word. The words are arranged in the table in descending order of difficulty.

TABLE I—SHOWING WORD DIFFICULTY

GRADE A-5

Initial Test

Words in descending order of difficulty	Times misspelled	Number of pupils spelling
surprise	7	10
loss	6	10
daughter	6	10
persons	6	10
engine	6	10
clerk	6	10
entered	5	10
known	5	10
beautiful	5	10
view	5	10
answer	4	10
destroyed	4	10
struck	4	10
since	3	10
failed	3	10
several	3	10
clothing	3	10
offered	3	10
offices	2	10
friend	2	10
chief	2	10
sometimes	2	10
himself	1	10
police	1	10
newspaper	0	10

The word difficulty graph is valuable for the teacher since it determines the words in the group most difficult for the majority, on which class instruction may be given. It determines also words difficult for certain pupils who may work in groups or independently with the teacher's aid.

To illustrate the above, the word "newspaper," spelled correctly by the entire class would require no attention, whereas the words "surprise" misspelled by 70% of the class; "clerks," "daughter," "loss," "engine," "persons" misspelled by 60%; "view," "beautiful," "known" and "entered" misspelled by 50%; "destroyed," "struck" and "answer" misspelled by 40%; and "failed," "several," "offered," "clothing," and "since" misspelled by 30% of the class, should be presented to the entire class including all the steps of presentation, and the particular points of difficulty should receive special emphasis. The remaining 6 words were misspelled by 20% and 10% of the class, and may be worked on by the pupils independently or in groups helped by the teacher.

I shall now record some of the types of errors made by this class.

*Omissions, due to haste in writing; know (known), enter (entered), offer (offered), person (persons).* These pupils need to improve their writing particularly in regard to rate. They also need practice in writing from dictation.

*Omissions, due to incorrect visual perception; beatiful (beautiful), chif (chief), frind (friend).* Diagnosis suggests presentation of the word from the beginning, emphasizing the visual phase.

*Transposition of two adjacent letters; view (view), cheif (chief), daugther (daughter), due to lack of proper visual image.* The remedy needed in these cases is to bring about readjustments of attention whereby pupils will look at those portions of the words which formerly they have failed, unconsciously, to see.

*Substitutions; suprise, supried, (surprise), ansert (answer), distroyed (destroyed), injun (engine).* Faulty pronunciation is undoubtedly the cause of this poor spelling. Diagnosis suggests drill on correct pronunciation and syllabication.

*Substitutions and omissions, due to trying*

to spell the word as it sounds; *dauter, dautter, (daughter), nown (known), veau (view), beutiful (beautiful), ancer, (answer), hemself (himself)*. Diagnosis suggests presentation of words laying stress upon the visual phase.

*Substitutions and omissions due to lack of familiarity or knowledge of the word; clake (clerks), buitly (beautiful).* Diagnosis suggests that the visual phase of these words be emphasized when presenting them to the class.

*Substitution, omission, and repetition of letters, due to poor visual image; bauteyful (beautiful), vaul (view), daugter (daughter).* I believe these pupils are familiar with the words, but they seem to have no definite mental image of them. Diagnosis suggests presentation of words including all the steps, emphasizing the visual form.

*Additions, due to haste in writing; engines (engine), and answere (answer).* In the latter case the cause might be due to strong inclination to continue the prominent letter. Diagnosis suggests care in writing.

I have selected for analysis the papers of two pupils in the class to show that poor spelling in any individual may be due to one or another of quite different defects, or to a combination of several defects. *Henry* has made 12 errors—six of which are due to spelling the words as they sound; *enjun, struk, distroyed, dawter, beutiful, non (known)*. He has spelled *surprise* “surprise,” which would seem to be caused by mispronunciation, but upon carefully examining his paper I have found the word “clerks” written “clesks,” and in several other simple words Henry has made “s” for “r.” He seems to confuse the two letters when writing rapidly. Undoubtedly he needs to improve his writing—with particular drill upon the letter “r.”

*Alfred* has a variety of types of errors. Seven errors are due to spelling the words as they sound, as *enjun, struk, distrod, anserd, sinc, nowen (known), fall (fail)*. He has substituted “cloak” for *clothing*, “men” for *police*, “seven” for *several*, and “law” for

*loss*, which I believe is due either to incorrect hearing, or failure to remember the word dictated. *Friend* is spelled “fraind”—substitution due to poor visual perception. This same type of error occurs three or four times caused by weakness in visual perception. *Clerk* for “clerks,” *person* for “persons” and *enter* for “entered,” are omissions caused by haste in writing. *Daughter* spelled “daugter” is another omission that occurs, which I believe is due to poor visual perception. From these facts it is evident that weakness in visual perception has contributed greatly to *Alfred*’s failures, and perhaps the best remedy would be to emphasize the visual form when presenting words to him. *Alfred* made twenty errors.

A few days after the initial test was given, all of the pupils were asked to write a fifteen minute composition. Each pupil selected his own topic from a list placed upon the board by the teacher. Nothing was said to them about spelling.

Upon examining *Henry*’s composition I find the same type of error that occurred in his dictation test—omissions due to spelling the words as they sound, for example, *certan* (certain), *peopel* (people). Two omissions were made, due to mis-pronunciation—*fam-leses* (families) and *tobaco* (tobacco). In several words the “r’s” look a little like “s’s,” but the formation is somewhat better than it was in the dictation test.

*Alfred*’s composition shows a variety of errors as does his dictation paper. I find two omissions, due to mispronunciation, and haste in writing—an (and), ove (over). Substitution, due to haste in writing mather (mother). Transposition, wolud (would), due to poor visual image. He has also confused “m” and “n,” writing “mot” for “not.” As stated before I believe that *Alfred* could be helped greatly by strengthening his visual perception.

In this paper I have sought to discuss, by illustrating the various steps in the process of diagnosis, the value of diagnosis to the teacher, and to the pupil.

## A TEST FOR HABITS IN ENGLISH

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ONE OF the important outcomes of school instruction should be habits of using correct language forms. Pupils learn the rules of language rather readily, e. g., that sentences should begin with capital letters; that question marks should follow questions; that the nominative form of a pronoun should, with a few exceptions, be used after a form of the verb "to be," etc. They may be able to pass fairly difficult examinations on the rules and principles of English, but because correct habits are not formed, they may still use both written and oral language marked by forms which violate these rules and principles.

In 1917 the writer attempted to devise a test which might be used to determine whether or not the use of certain forms had become automatic in the minds of pupils.

The task proved to be difficult. If habit was to be tested, an exercise had to be of such character as not to attract special attention to the form and yet it had to present a situation in which pupils would use either the correct or an incorrect form and not "avoid the issue" by using an alternative form. For example, in connection with the word "too" the following exercise was used in an early form of the test.

"In the blank in the following exercise put a word that rhymes with "new."

Said Jack, "My book is nice and new."

Said Jill, "I wish I had one....."

It was expected that pupils would use "too" or "to" or "two." It was found, however, that pupils sometimes used "also." This was perfectly good English but obviously the exercise failed to secure what was desired. It would have been possible to direct the pupils to choose from among the three words, but,

had this been done, then their conscious attention would have been directed to the point and the purpose of the test defeated.

Since 1917 the test has been printed ten times and, except in the case of the last three printings, minor modifications were made each time in order to avoid such exercises as the one indicated in the above paragraph.

It is not claimed that the test is in all respects a measure of habit. Since it is a *test*, pupils no doubt often determine just what the point involved in the exercise is and then recall, in a conscious way, a rule or an example that covers the case. The experience of large numbers of pupils who have taken the test, however, is that, in connection with most of the exercises, they did not think of any form, other than the one they used. Additional evidence that habit is the factor which determines the response in most of the exercises is presented later.

The test embodies fifty-six points classified as follows,—

Verb forms .....	18
Punctuation .....	12
Pronoun forms .....	10
Capitalization .....	7
Adverb forms and modifiers.....	4
Adjective forms and modifiers.....	3
"There" as expletive.....	1
Double negative .....	1

These points were determined by an examination of ten language books in common use and also by a study of lists of errors as determined by Charters and by Fillers. The test includes eighty-five per cent of all the types of errors found in the two studies.

Two alternative forms of the test designated as A and B are in use. A few exercises from Form A are reproduced as follows:

1. What day of the week is this?.....	2	2
9. Ask me to hand the papers to you and James.	.....	2
18. When Hetty wants to play outdoors she says to her mother, "Mother, ..... I play outdoors?"	2	26
27. Ernest had broken a window in a neighbor's house. His father was angry and said, "Now I shall have to pay for ..... breaking that window."	2	44
		82

The points on which the above exercises are scored are as follows:

Ex. 1 Capital beginning sentence.  
 Capital beginning name of day.  
 Period at end of sentence.  
 Ex. 9 "Me" as object.  
 Ex. 18 "May" in asking permission.  
 Ex. 27 "Your" modifying breaking.

The numbers in lighter type following each exercise indicate the value assigned to each point, and the numbers in heavier type indicate the cumulative score. The test as a whole is scored on the basis of 100 points.

The test has been used extensively in Wisconsin, Illinois, Nebraska, Colorado, and Washington and less extensively in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Minnesota, Iowa, and Louisiana. It has also been used in a few schools in other states.

It was intended originally that the test should be used in the elementary schools only,

but it has been used so widely in high schools that standards for Grades 9 to 12 inclusive have been established and a list of errors made by high school students prepared.

In 1920 standards for Grades 5 to 8 inclusive were established on the basis of scores made by about 4,000 pupils in each grade. The tests had been given to these pupils at different times in the school year, however, and no distinction had been made as to the minor changes in the character of the exercises.

During the school year 1920-'21 the test was given to 2900 pupils in Grades 5 to 8 inclusive in Wisconsin.

At this time it became necessary to have an alternative test and Form B was devised. Near the middle of the school year Form B and also Form A were given to about 400 pupils in each of the grades from the 5th to

the 8th inclusive. The schools represented were located in several different states and were parts of systems of various sizes. The pupils who took the tests made up the sections that were finishing the grade at the middle of the year. Approximately half took Form A first and the other half Form B. The tests were given under rigid conditions and at about the same time in each of the schools.

The results of these various applications of the test are given in Table I in the form of median scores. The number of pupils in each group is given also.

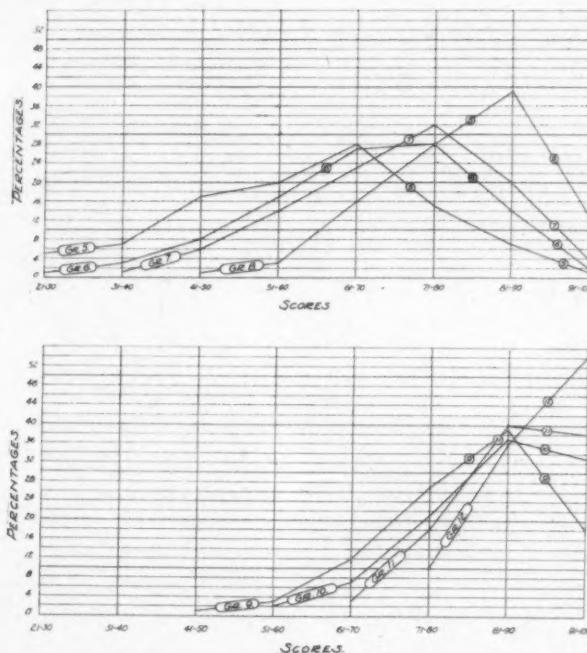


FIGURE 1—BASED ON TABLE III

The percentage distribution of scores when grouped by 10's

TABLE I  
MEDIAN SCORES FOR FORM A

	Grade 5		Grade 6	
	No. of Pupils	Median Score	No. of Pupils	Median Score
Up to 1920.....	4015	66.4	4573	71.1
Wisconsin, 1921 .....	728	65.3	713	72.5
Special group, 1921....	412	60.8	522	68.4
Weighted average .....		65.8		71.0
	Grade 7		Grade 8	
	No. of Pupils	Median Score	No. of Pupils	Median Score
Up to 1920.....	4877	76.0	4362	79.5
Wisconsin, 1921 .....	785	73.6	744	80.9
Special group, 1921....	618	72.3	296	81.6
Weighted average .....		75.3		79.8

In May 1922, both forms of the test were given to 1421 high school students with the following results for Form A:—Ninth grade 397 pupils, median score 82.6; tenth grade 375 pupils, median score 86.7; eleventh grade, 393 pupils, median score 88.8; twelfth grade 258 pupils, median score 91.7.

On the basis of all the results given above, the writer suggests the standard scores given below as being convenient and sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes.

STANDARD SCORES

Grade	Standard	Grade	Standard
5	65	9	83
6	70	10	86
7	75	11	89
8	80	12	92

Table II gives  $Q_1$  (the median of the lower half of the scores) and  $Q_3$  (the median of the upper half of the scores) together with the standard scores given just above.  $Q_1$  and  $Q_3$  were determined from the same data as were the standard scores.

TABLE II

Grade	$Q_1$	Standard Median	$Q_3$
5	52	65	70
6	62	70	77
7	64	75	80
8	73	80	87
9	75	83	89
10	79	86	93
11	82	89	95
12	86	92	96

The scores for the special group in 1921 and those made by high school students in

1922 when grouped by 10's give the percentage distribution presented in Table III.

TABLE III  
THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES WHEN GROUPED BY 10'S

Scores	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
21- 30	5	1						
31- 40	7	3	1					
41- 50	17	8	6	1				
51- 60	20	17	4	3	3	2	1	
61- 70	28	27	23	16	12	7	3	
71- 80	15	28	32	28	27	21	18	10
81- 90	7	14	20	39	39	37	40	36
91-100	1	2	4	13	18	33	38	54

The facts of Table III are presented graphically in Figure I, page 43.

The curve of distribution for Grade 5 resembles the normal curve more closely than does that for any other grade, while the curve for Grade 12 approaches a perpendicular position. In this connection it should be recalled that the test involves a limited number of points in the rudiments of English that *should be* practically matters of habit by the end of Grade 12.

No attempt has been made to weight the different points in the list according to difficulty since, supposedly, each one should be mastered by the pupils. The weighting indicated in the test is purely arbitrary and designed to give a total score of 100 for a perfect paper. However, a study of the percentages of error for the different points reveals the ones that will probably need most attention in any school. Table IV presents the fifty-six points of the test in increasing order of difficulty for the four grades of the elementary school. Percentages of error for both the elementary and the high school are given, and also the rank of each point in difficulty. Where the percentages of error were the same in integral terms for two or more points the rank was determined by calculating the percentages in decimal terms. The percentages for the elementary grades are based on the special tests given in 1921. The points are divided into four groups so that a single point may be located with reference to the hardest fourth, the easiest fourth, or either of the two middle fourths.

TABLE IV

## THE FIFTY-SIX POINTS OF THE CLAPP ENGLISH TEST ARRANGED IN ORDER OF INCREASING DIFFICULTY WITH PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS

Number of Exercises in Form A	Point	Per Cent of Errors for El. School	Per Cent of Errors for High School	Rank for El. School	Rank for High School
3	Capital—first name of person.	1	1	1	1
1	Capital—name of day.	2	5	2	16
3	Capital—last name of person.	4	2	3	3
3	Capital—name of town.	4	2	4	4
4	Capital—name of month.	5	8	5	21
1	Capital—beginning of sentence.	5	11	6	26
10	Two—meaning number.	5	1	7	2
6	Plural verb—with plural subject.	6	2	8	5
7	I—in compound subject.	7	3	9	7
18	May—in asking permission.	9	2	10	6
21	Drank—past of drink.	9	4	11	12
21	Rang—past of ring.	10	3	12	9
24	Him—with self.	10	4	13	14
22	Doesn't—with singular subject.	11	4	14	15
25	There—as expletive, not "their".	12	3	15	10
12	Came—past of come.	13	8	16	22
15	Ate—past of eat.	14	6	17	17
8	I—as predicate nominative.	14	11	18	27
1	Period at end of sentence.	15	22	19	41
24	Them—with selves.	15	6	20	18
20	Gone—past of go.	17	7	21	19
17	That or who—referring to persons.	18	3	22	8
21	Saw—past of see.	22	13	23	30
4	Comma—between words of co-ordinate construction in a series.	22	15	24	36
25	Their—as pronoun, not "there".	22	3	25	11
26	Have—meaning obligation, not "haf," "haft" or "half".	23	8	26	23
14	Whom—relative pronoun as object.	26	18	27	38
21	Were—as past of "be" with you.	28	10	28	25
13	Apostrophe—to indicate possession with proper noun.	28	4	29	13
2	Question mark—after question.	28	14	30	32
23	Were—as subjunctive.	31	11	31	28
4	Comma—before "and" in a series of words of co-ordinate construction.	31	45	32	54
21	Sit—meaning to rest.	32	18	33	39
21	Eaten—perfect of eat.	34	8	34	24
28	Comma—before a direct quotation.	35	18	35	40
21	Lie—meaning to recline.	39	14	36	33
5	Too—meaning also.	39	13	37	31
11	Double negative—avoided.	41	7	38	20
28	Apostrophe—in I'll.	41	15	39	37
28	Quotation marks—before direct quotation.	43	28	40	44
28	Quotation marks—after direct quotation.	44	36	41	47
29	Nominative pronoun—after "as well as".	47	14	42	35
29	Period—after abbreviation.	47	36	43	48
21	Knew—past of know.	49	12	45	29
16	Adverb—ending in "ly".	49	14	44	34
29	Adverb "could hardly," not "could not hardly".	50	24	46	43
28	Capital—beginning direct quotation.	56	40	47	50
29	Used—not "use" or "ust".	58	23	48	42
29	Tense—same tense in sequential clauses.	59	32	49	45
28	Possessive sign—with plural not ending in "s".	63	43	50	52
19	That—modifying kind, e. g. "that kind of apples".	64	41	51	51
29	Have not—instead of "have not got".	64	39	52	49
19	This—modifying kind, e. g. "this kind of apples".	65	47	53	55
9	Me—in compound object.	66	34	54	46
27	Your—modifying gerund.	72	44	55	53
28	Possessive sign—with plural ending in "s".	78	64	56	56

In 1921 a second form of the test was devised which was designated as Form B, the first form being called Form A. All of the

data thus far presented concern Form A only.

The pupils who made up the group that

were tested in a special way in 1921, took both forms. As stated above, approximately one-half took Form A first while the other half took Form B first. The two forms were given at intervals of from one to three weeks. The same procedure was employed in the case of the high school pupils in 1922.

The exact medians,  $Q_1$  and  $Q_3$ , are given for each of the forms in Table V.

TABLE V  
RESULTS FOR FORM A AND FOR FORM B COMPARED

Grade	$Q_1$		Median		$Q_3$	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
5	50.1	48.5	60.8	57.0	69.9	70.4
6	62.4	58.1	68.4	69.7	76.4	78.4
7	63.0	64.7	72.3	74.9	80.2	81.9
8	73.3	73.7	81.6	82.5	88.2	90.7
9	75.3	76.3	82.6	83.9	89.1	90.8
10	79.5	81.6	86.7	88.6	93.1	94.5
11	81.7	83.8	88.2	90.0	94.7	94.9
12	86.1	88.1	91.7	92.8	95.8	97.1

The average  $Q_1$  is .2 of a point higher for Form B than for Form A; the median is .9 higher; and the average  $Q_3$  is 1.4 higher. These figures would indicate that Form B is approximately 1 point easier than Form A. It remains to be seen whether this difference holds when the three indices are calculated on the basis of a larger number of scores.

Form B contains exactly the same points as Form A, the character of the exercises and the order of presentation alone being different.

The Pearson Coefficient of Correlation between the two forms based on results for the elementary grades is .800 with a Probable Error of .008.

The Probable Error of Measurement for each of the high school grades is:—for the 9th Grade, 3.50; for the 10th Grade, 3.94; for the 11th Grade 3.50; for the 12th Grade, 3.04. For the four high school grades combined this index was 3.53. This means that any individual score is valid to within about 3.5 points. The formula used in determining the probable error of measurement is as follows,—P.E.m = .5978 x average difference of scores.

The last point to be presented has to do with habit as a determining factor in the responses which pupils give to the exercises of the test. Where the correct usage was employed in *both* Form A and Form B, it is reasonable to suppose that habit was the controlling force, though this is not necessarily true. Likewise, where a wrong usage was employed in *both* forms it is likely that habit played a large part, especially where practically all the responses were the same. It may be that in both of these cases a rule was recalled (the right one in the first case and a wrong one in the second case) but this would certainly not have given the same response in many cases where the response was wrong. Of the fifty-six points in the test there were thirty-seven in connection with which the number of pupils missing the point in Form A but not in Form B or *vice versa* was larger than the number missing the point in both forms. This may be interpreted as indicating the functioning of habits that are not yet fully fixed, that is, they function at one time but not at another.

The true University of these days is a collection of books.—*Carlyle*.

## PLANNING THE FUTURE

ESTHER HELM COLE

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ONE DAY the children in an A-4 foreign grade were discussing what they wished to be when they grew up. The teacher suggested that it would be interesting to make a record of each child's future as he had planned it.

After further planning it was decided that one child be chosen to use the small printing outfit and make an appropriate cover for a wall chart. This chart was to contain a written statement from each child, telling what she or he expected to be.

When the activity was completed, it was found that the chart was good enough to hang in the room. On the cover of gray paper (9 x 12") was printed the title—

### *WHAT WE ARE GOING TO BE*

*A-Fourth Grade—Solano School*

On the inside pages were pasted the papers written by the different children. The following illustrate some of the thoughts expressed:

"I am going to be a telephone operator, or maybe a bookkeeper. But first I am going to college."—*Mary*

"When I grow big the kind of work I'm going to do is carpenter work"—*Homer*

"I am going to be a mechanic when I am big because that is a good job and you get lots of money."—*Louis*

"I am going to be a toe dancer and dance on my toes. And when I have become a good dancer, I am going to dance at shows. Of course, I must have lots of costumes with spangles and feathers and pink toe shoes and black ones too."—*Kathleen*

"I want to be a good artist and draw pictures as good as the pictures that we have on the wall. So I can send pictures to Spain, New York, Mexico, France, Italy and many other places of the world. That is all. I was born

in Mexico in February 1913 and my name is *Eulalio*."

"I want to grow and be a good citizen, to be considerate of other people. So all the people will like me when I am kind to them."—*Mararita*.

"I would like to be an American soldier. If I had to go to war, I would like to shoot the cannon."—*Phillip*

"I am going to be a lawyer to fight for accidents and be kind and good and unselfish to help poor people."—*Robert*

"I am going to be a good drawing teacher and then go from school to school to show the boys and girls how to draw good pictures. I am going to draw some other pictures to send to other countries."—*Elena*

"I should like to be a storekeeper and sell clothes, shoes, dresses and coats so I could get money to give to my mother."—*Rose*

"I would like to be a nurse. And if war should come, I would treat the soldiers kindly, because they tried to save their loved country. And when I had a lot of money I would help the poor people. I would visit all the countries of Europe and then Persia and Egypt. Then I would tell all the children about all the people and their homes in a geography book I would make."—*Manuela*

This activity brought about an opportunity for the children to practice and improve in organization of a class product, in spelling, penmanship, composition, and in artistic mounting of written work.

Many of the pupils were foreign. The project included much oral discussion of trades and professions and of the work involved in each.

The activity was particularly good for this mixed group of X. Y. Z. children as it allowed each child to contribute according to his own ability.

## TENTATIVE SIXTH GRADE ENGLISH PLANS

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THE PURPOSE of teaching English in all elementary grades should be to help children to have thoughts worth expressing, and to express these thoughts orally, or in writing, in clear, pleasing ways. The work of the grades differentiates in the suitability of the thoughts to the development of the children, and in the degree and quality of conscious attention that the children are able to give to the form side of expression.

A first grade child should have worth-while thoughts within the range of his experience and interest. He should be helped also to express these thoughts clearly, correctly, and pleasingly. He should not, however, be expected to give much conscious attention to the form side.

Sixth grade children have gained much in breadth and depth of experience. They are able to give considerable attention to good forms of expression and enjoy doing it if rightly directed. It is at about this age that children begin to feel themselves growing up; they are eager to acquire grown-up, or what to them appear to be grown-up forms of expression. At the same time a very marked reserve often begins to come over them so that they lose much of the buoyant spontaneity younger children have.

Definite plans for any grade resolve themselves into selecting the content of the work and planning devices for its execution. The Indianapolis Course of Study in English plans for overcoming all the common technical errors in English listed in *\*English Composition as a Social Problem*, and about fifty additional ones, below the sixth grade. At the beginning of the outline for each grade appears, "Review the work of the preceding grades." Therefore it becomes the duty of the

sixth grade teacher to find out which flagrant errors still persist, and if she is wise to choose, at most, four or five of them against which to direct her fire. Fortunately, my children come from fairly cultured homes so that really bad grammar is not our biggest problem. When one of these flagrant errors, which have been found to be common to a large part of the school, appears in a composition or any written work, it may be taken alone, first to teach and then to drill on for a short time each day for a week or two weeks as the case seems to need. Then a test may be given. The children understand that thereafter, in all oral and written work, that particular mistake will be most heavily penalized. They do not mind being corrected by teacher and mates for one mistake, if they are not at the same time being nagged for everything they say.

Devices for this kind of drill should be largely spontaneous growing out of the immediate situation. At least they should be spontaneous in their adaptation. However suggestions are helpful, so some are added later in this paper.

In our course of study, the new sixth grade problem is the beginning of formal grammar. This is expected to mean the teaching of the subject and predicate, and word modifiers, adjective and adverbial, in simple sentences. No particular difficulties are encountered. The children like especially to use the diagram and make definite grades on papers. The difficulty lies in making the work simple enough. I hope this year to be able to make sets of sentences for mimeograph duplication, grouped in increasing difficulty within the ranges of the grade work. Examples are given at the conclusion of this paper.

Children make this grammar work function in the proof reading of their own written

\*S. A. Leonard. *English Composition as a Social Problem*. Houghton.

compositions. They are not always easily able to supply a verb to a phrase, but they realize that a group of words without a predicate is not a sentence.

Of course, grammar of this kind is a very formal thing which should not be pushed too far. It is merely one help and it will not work miracles. As long as the teacher is free to use it as she sees fit, it does not seem objectionable in the sixth grade.

The real problem for the English work is oral and written composition. This should be spontaneous, enthusiastic, and alive, but it cannot be progressive and really educative without careful forethought and planning on the part of both teacher and children. However, the best plans are always tentative, especially as to details. The use intended for the following list of topics is that the general topic given on the first day shall suggest sub-topics for oral composition until as many views as possible of the big theme have been presented. These sub-topics should be developed in short paragraphs of from three to twelve sentences. They may at first be limited and suggested by the teacher. As the children grow, they themselves will be able to choose single incidents relating to the whole. Their short paragraphs should be open to criticism and direction by both teacher and pupils, but the criticism should be largely appreciative and always constructive.

One plan of development is to give the general theme and get impromptu, informal response enough to arouse interest. The class is shown enough of the lack of organization in this informal work to arouse a desire for improvement. As a second step, the teacher may read to the class five or six very short related stories or parts of stories that are in themselves units. Then, the next day, perhaps, the children make another effort at better prepared oral compositions on the same subject. If they understand that this is to be done some of them may bring in stories or paragraphs which they have found independently. They should be allowed to read these to the class. Reading is better

here than telling, for no one gets the idea that he may reproduce and call the work his own.

When the subject has been looked at from all sides, or at least from as many as possible in a suitable time, a list of four or five very limited topics or phases of the general theme under discussion may be put on the board and the children allowed to choose one on which to write. Of course, no one is penalized for taking a topic not suggested, provided it bears on the general theme. During the oral composition work good sentences and good organization should be called to attention by praise of good example, rather than condemnation of failures. This can also appear in the reading.

Thus far, the three steps of collecting material, organizing that material and writing the composition are accomplished. Only the proof reading remains. It seems most satisfactory to have the pupils look over their work for specific single mistakes. For example, spelling is corrected by the pupils by means of questions, consulting the dictionary, and sometimes exchanging papers for just this one correction. A second, separate effort should be made for sentence structure. It often helps the child who is in doubt about his sentences to be allowed to read the doubtful parts to the class, or to another pupil, and receive help from them, if he is unable to work things out for himself.

By the time all this has been done, especially if the collecting of material has been a little long, interest may begin to lag unless something new is introduced. One suggestion is to divide the class into committees of six or eight, with one pupil as the chairman of each committee. All members will read their compositions and then they will vote on the best one. The pupils whose compositions are chosen may then read their papers to the class at some suitable time, or their papers may be posted on the bulletin board, put in the room folio, or chosen for publication in the school paper.

Each child may keep all his written compositions in whatever form he or the teacher deems advisable. It is, however, profitable for him to keep them.

It is most helpful to mark the compositions for just one or two mistakes at a time. Thus it is not necessary that the teacher grade every composition. At such intervals as the progress of the work warrants, pupils should have graded papers returned to them that they may recognize their progress and position in the work.

An effort has been made in the following theme outline to be merely suggestive of general topics with typical deductions covering as wide a range of suitability as possible. No pertinent lines of thought would be excluded, nor would any outline of this kind be prescribed. This has simply grown out of the known conditions of my particular problem.

#### THEME SUGGESTIONS

##### I. Vacation Experiences.

The most interesting thing I did.  
The grandest sight I saw.  
Just a bit of fun.

##### II. Adventures of members of the family.

Mother's part in the picnic.  
How father drives.  
My brother's fish.  
What our baby did.

##### III. Exchange letters with vacation friends or with some other school.

The beginning of school.  
Some individual interest.

##### IV. How to do something interesting.

Make a water wheel.  
Dress a paper doll.  
Wind an electric coil.  
Clean a room.  
Build a fire or tie a knot.

##### V. If—What would you like to do or be if free of all restrictions?

##### VI. Rainy Day Experiences.

I got wet.  
The hike in the rain.  
The picnic we did not have.  
The cat would not get her feet wet.

##### VII. Gold mining.

Indian mining in South America.  
Placer mining.  
How mercury helps.  
Deep mining.  
Quartz.

##### VIII. Getting ready.

For the show.  
To play circus.  
To go on an auto trip.  
To entertain company.

##### IX. Superstitions.

Going under a ladder.  
Finding a pin.

##### X. Stories about my pets.

My first pet.  
The best pet I ever had.

##### XI. A history round table.

I am an Egyptian. (Hebrew,  
Babylonian, etc.)  
What my country did for civilization.

##### XII. Nature reports.

Trees, birds, bees. Real experiences.

##### XIII. Week end experiences.

My Saturday morning work.  
Our club meeting.  
A party at our house.

##### XIV. Dreams and fairy tales.

(Rather doubtful except for  
certain specific purposes of  
awakening the imagination).

##### XV. Conduct.

Courtesy to visitors at school.  
Table manners.  
How to introduce a friend.  
What to do on the street car or  
train.

#### A FEW ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTIONS TO BE USED WITH THE THEME SUGGESTIONS

At the lake last summer Bob wanted to learn to swim. His father said, "You must play you are a frog." Bob had often seen

the frogs in the pond at home. He knew just how they looked when they swam. He tried to do as they did, but he couldn't. "I didn't know frogs knew so much," he said.

We visited Grand Canyon last summer. All the colors on the sides were wonderful. It is very, very deep. The river at the bottom looks like a ribbon. It made me hold my breath.

The snow storm from Lorna Doone and parts of Snow Bound may be read to sixth grade children effectively if they happen to fit any occasion.

#### TECHNICAL DEVICES

- I. Write on the board:—doesn't like rain. Class write as many words as possible in 3 minutes to fill blank. All stand; read one at a time around the class. As soon as a pupil's list is all read he sits. The last ones up win because of greater resourcefulness in language.
- II. Follow-my-leader depends on spirit of leader almost entirely: Yesterday I saw the moon. Last night I saw the moon. Last week I saw the moon. Children repeat in order after leader until it becomes amusing. This device can be used to fix a form.
- III. Question game. The children must answer every question with *have* or *has* or *had seen*. For example:

What do you know of a bluebird?

I have seen its blue breast.

How did Tom know the owl lived here?

He had seen one in a hole in a tree. Forfeits for failures may be repeating the correct form after the game time is up. Not over five minutes after the game is learned is usually profitable for forfeits.

#### FORMAL GRAMMAR SUGGESTIONS

Directions may be put on the board or given orally. Mimeograph stencil sheets are used for the sentences. These are only suggestions.

- I. Select subject and predicate ideas complete.
  1. Birds fly.
  2. The sun shines.
  3. Water flows downward.
  4. Merrily sings the robin.
  5. The children shouted.
- II. Select unmodified subject and predicate.
  1. Bright spring flowers bloom.
  2. A tall man entered quietly.
  3. Nearby stood a tall brick house.
  4. A dainty little maid tripped merrily along.
  5. The cold dull day passed slowly.
- III. Distinguished between subject and predicate.
  1. The big church bell tolled sadly.
  2. Suddenly appeared a big black cloud.
  3. Quietly the sly Indian slipped away.
  4. The tall church spire pointed skyward.
  5. Suddenly a great airplane thundered overhead.

*First Grade*—(is, are, was, were) (see, saw, seen) (do, does, did, done) (has, have) (run, ran) (come, came)

Capitals for name, I, sentence.

Period and interrogation point.

*Second Grade*—tear, bring, give, burst, throw, drink, go, break, eat.

Capital for persons, places, days of the week, Mr. and Mrs.

Plural in "s" and "es."

*Third Grade*—know, grow, draw, write, take, wear, freeze, teach, learn.

Capitals for titles, months, and proper names.

Apostrophe in singular and plural, hyphen at end of line, quotation marks, commas before direct quotation.

*Fourth Grade*—sing, ride, carry, get, speak, begin, ask, catch, have, let, can, guess, think.

Distinguish: between and among, in and into, mad and angry.

Exclamation point and period for imperative.

*Fifth Grade*—(sit, set) (lie, lay) (rise, raise) (don't, doesn't) (isn't, aren't) those, them, this, that, like, as if, it's and its.

*Sixth Grade*—Grammar. The sentence—subject, predicate, and word modifiers, Auxiliary verb and prepositional phrases.

## ORAL COMPOSITION IN SIXTH GRADE

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**T**HREE IS little argument, if any, against the fact that oral language is the most important subject taught in the elementary school. There is no study so closely related to all other subjects, and so essential to their successful teaching. The several recitations of the day afford a constant field for applying in actual use the lessons learned in the regular language exercise. In the social world nothing places a person so quickly as his speech. "One's speech is the symbol of his mind." Language is the indispensable tool in the business world; in fact there is no life not in need of it.

Again, language is important because it is closely identified with the thinking process. Before we communicate thoughts we must have formed thoughts to communicate. Much of the poor work is due to the failure of the teacher to understand this fact. Thoughts tend to find immediate expression in words. "No expression without impression" is a maxim which teachers should keep in mind. Language and thought are inseparable; for language is a thought producer.

The composition period is surely a farce when the teacher does not enter into it energetically and whole heartedly. He must have a genuine interest in what the pupil has to say encouraging him courteously to make his meaning clear if need be. The teacher should have a definite well formed plan in mind for improving the language of the children. He should act in the capacity of a silent inventory clerk to record weaknesses for individual conferences. It does seem that the poor work of oral composition is largely due to the lack of our sympathetic co-operation with the efforts of the child.

The field of motivation for the oral composition is very large. There are many real

motives such as that of the story teller or the speech maker motive. Children of the sixth grade love to tell of their experiences, and their child audience enjoys them too. While more difficult is the telling of how they made different things or played different games, I think children enjoy such talks equally well. The audience gains many new ideas too, to be carried out in leisure time. The speech making motive is another type. This includes announcements, results of games, either before the pupil's own class or another. Club organization is helpful in this type. The "community-worker" type cannot be carried out so extensively in sixth grade, but it is a good project in that it teaches pupils to work with the group. Children enjoy discussing local needs, clean up weeks, beautiful lawns, thrifty gardens. (There is a strong motive here for written composition. Letters may be written to different parts of the country for information on geographical topics). The reports of "community-worker" projects make a good assembly program or a morning exercise. All oral composition should be a basis for written themes, and written work in all school branches.

The subject is the basis for good work in composition and should be chosen from a source within the pupil's knowledge and interest. Children's lives are crowded with incidents; from their life at home, in the streets, in school; from their sports, tasks, amusements, duties; from the things they have seen, felt, heard, done, and imagined. Every sane child has something to say if we can strike the chord of production.

We must not only seek subjects where the pupil's knowledge, and interest lie, but we must suggest definite parts of those. "What I Did During Vacation" is a type of subject to

be avoided. It is too big and comprehensive. It would certainly not invite coherence, but on the other hand it would result in merely cataloguing events. What we want to do is to take one specific thing that happened and lead the child to organize his ideas around that. Children must be taught to "narrow their subject."

To keep up interest there must be a variety of subjects. If a group of boys should each tell of the same particular event that happened at the boy scout camp how monotonous it would be. Hence we must have the individual conference to take care of this. The resourceful teacher will have on hand a wide range of suggestive subjects pertaining to children's interests—narrative, explanatory, and imaginative.

The aims of oral composition in sixth grade are as follows:

1. To encourage pupils to talk freely on account of genuine interest, but with a *definite* and *clearly formed plan* in the mind of the teacher for improving their use of language.
2. To require equally good English in all classes and to co-operate with other teachers in the department and systems.
3. To develop distinct articulation, a pleasing tone, freedom from self consciousness.
4. To eliminate a few errors of speech, particularly the most gross and prevalent.
5. To strengthen sentence sense.
6. To emphasize orderly arrangements of sentence material to develop ability to stick to the point, and to develop good beginnings and endings in composition.
7. To cultivate among the children a felt need for good English in social, business, and recreational life.

The next step is to carry out this program of aims. The first point involved is getting acquainted. This can be accomplished by allowing children in the first week of school to talk informally on any subject. During this process the teacher should act unobtrusively as an alert inventory clerk recording the accomplishments and deficiencies. This record should give the teacher a basis for work. Which pupils talked coherently and seemed to try to organize. Which children selected one phase of a subject. What flagrant uses of English were prevalent, and which pupils seemed to have the "and" habit.

In these informal talks some one in class may express a desire to know more about some one thing that was told. Mary told many things that happened while she was abroad with her parents. John wants to know more about the big boat she went in. This suggestion forms a basis for our next step, the single phase idea. The class might be asked if they would like to have each tell about just one thing as John suggested about Mary's talk. They might be told too, that this would give every one an opportunity to talk in the period. The teacher could give a single phase of something she experienced, by way of further explanation.

The next day the talks should be given in front of the class. During the period, the teacher will again take inventory noting those who talked coherently and otherwise. After the compositions have been given, the class might be asked to decide what one they liked best. No doubt the one having good organization and sufficient details to put the message across would be the choice of the class. Questions might be asked as to why they liked it in order to bring out reasons for prepared talks on single phase ideas.

Several days should be taken by way of stimulation and preparation before individual assignments are given. The most important step is to suggest in a general way subjects in which children are vitally interested. After they express enthusiasm over something they want to talk about, they should discuss the single phase idea. Some single phase paragraphs could be read in class to saturate the pupils with the idea.

The title should come in for its share in preparation for oral themes. The teacher should read several good paragraph compositions and discuss the fitness of the title. She should try to develop the fact that a good title should be brief, fit the subject, and attract, in the sense of arousing interest or anticipation. She should be careful not to overwork the attractiveness lest the result should be "over smart titles" or an attempt to wrest the ideas of the compositions to fit

the title. Children should select their own titles if possible, either before they think through their composition or after they finish writing it.

While the beginning sentence is a very important phase of the composition work, devices are dangerous for the reason that they are so mechanically applied. In order to assist the pupils in originality, naturalness, and spontaneity, the teacher had better let them work out their own salvation in beginning sentences. If his first efforts are crude he will learn much from them. No doubt some of his peers will have beginning sentences that will help him feel the need. The tactful teacher in the individual conference can help to steer him toward the goal. The main aim here should be gradually to train children to compose beginning sentences, so they will waste as little time as possible in getting at the heart of the subject.

Mechanical devices or models have no place in teaching oral composition. The aim should be to get real, vivid individual expression from the children, and to teach them to think in organizing it. The procedure should be the clearance of inhibitions to thought instead of putting model sign posts in the child's way. It has been well said that "Imitation is the curse of the nation."

After considering the foregoing preliminaries, the teacher is ready to ask each child to think of a title that will fit some single phase of his experience, and to construct a beginning and closing sentence. When three or four of the pupils have brought this work to her, she may ask them to prepare their oral compositions and come for rehearsal before presentation. Each pupil in the class will proceed in the same way, but only three or four should present their compositions before the class at one time.

The rehearsal of these prepared talks gives the teacher an opportunity to get the child's co-operation in wanting to do his best. It gives the timid child more chance to gain confidence in himself for the teacher can give helpful suggestions without embarrassing.

The teacher must be patient with these first attempts and avoid being too critical. The aim should be constructive criticism.

After the prepared talk has been given before the class, the child should have the first chance at criticising his own work. Then the class will comment on any good points, and courteously comment on poor ones. The criticisms should be on the substance, organization, and coherence. For these technical terms the teacher should substitute *sticking to the point, telling things in order, and making the meaning clear*. Children's minds should not be cluttered up with meaningless terms.

After the children have given these first prepared talks, it is well to have them write their oral compositions so the results of their first attempts in the year may be kept on file for reference as to progress. It would be well to put the best compositions on the bulletin board for a time.

This preparation and presentation of themes should be kept up throughout the year. Different procedures can be taken as the needs of the class demand. As the class advances, it would be well to have the child who presents a composition ask the class a few questions to convince himself and them that they got his meaning. This would be a little variety and help to hold the attention.

The time not occupied by the presentation and comments of the composition work in class period can be well spent in developing sentence sense. The teacher may discuss good sentences, and improve poor ones which she has gleaned from their work. In this sentence work variety should be sought to maintain interest. There are helpful suggestions in Mr. S. A. Leonard's book, English Composition As a Social Problem, on pages 156, 157 and 158. Mr. Sheridan's suggestions on the Mastery of the Sentence Idea are very good. Then there are many helps in Materials for Composition by Deming.

Avoiding repetition of the same word or phrase should have marked attention. The conventional order of subject and verb in

the sentence tends toward monotony, so some work in simple inversion might be taken up toward the end of the sixth grade. The need of this work will be shown in the children's compositions, and it may be done collectively or individually as the teacher sees fit.

From the teacher's inventory the most flagrant and frequent use of poor English may be attacked. Mr. Leonard's group on page 125 in English Composition As a Social Problem may be considered. If the group for grades one to three are not eradicated, she must begin there, and concentrate on one at a time.

In the eradication of English errors, the teacher must try to enlist the desires of the children. She must try to develop the idea that society demands this, that people are classed as to their speech. When the child begins to care immensely he is on the right road to the land of good English.

The training of children in oral language is a hard slow process, but its need is so paramount that the teacher must meet the issue squarely. It behooves her to keep at it persistently throughout the year, varying her procedure to keep the work attractive. She should encourage children to select subjects into which they can put their opinions, and judgments and then teach them to think straight.

As the main underlying principle of these suggestions in oral language work is a reaction from the reading of Prof. Leonard's English Composition As a Social Problem, I recommend that book as a reference in carrying out this project. Other helpful references are Sheridan's Speaking and Writing English, Methods and Material in Composition, Deming, Standards in English, Mahoney.

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### THE CAGED CARDINAL

*Isabel DeVine Moore*

WHEN I was in the woodland,  
A patch of color, gay,  
You saw my crested beauty  
And heard my roundelay:  
I piped a joyous message,  
And whistled, crystal clear,  
When I was in the woodland,  
And sang of "Cheer! What cheer!"

But I am caged and broken,  
A silent wisp of flame,  
And you may hold in bondage  
A songbird but in name:  
No more in dulcet measures  
I carol, blithe and free;  
My heart is in the woodland  
And life is naught to me.

## BOOK PROBLEMS IN THE READING ROOM

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**G**IVEN: the elementary school library. Problem: to provide sufficient reference material for a group at a given time.

This problem of meeting the constant incoming demands of the various departments of the elementary school for reference material, seems to be a major one in the life of the librarian. And it is undoubtedly an important one, for upon its ability to meet these demands is the success of the library constantly being judged by principals, teachers, pupils.

There are of course several fundamental principles upon which the solution of this problem rests. Foremost of these is the assumption that the library reference collection has been based upon a careful study of the demands of the school courses of study. This is a basic consideration and must be renewed each time the curriculum changes in order that additional materials may be provided to meet new demands and expanded ideas. Too often it is assumed that any well chosen list of books will meet the need of any school. That this is not true is apparent upon consideration of the fact that one school may represent a group of children who have read widely outside of school, while another is composed of foreign children to whom reading of the English language is difficult and who consequently demand a simpler type of reference materials.

Granted now that there is a reference collection suited to the demands of both children and the course of study, the problem of meeting the calls for material may still be unsolved. And the final solution would seem to rest upon the principle of co-operation. Many teachers have not grown up, as it were, with school libraries. Consequently they do not understand that in order to use it to advantage not only the librarian but they also must know

what the library contains in their particular field. To educate teachers to this point of view is one of the librarian's many duties. She may assist by sending to teachers lists of the material contained in the library on special subjects, and by notifying them of new book purchases in their particular line of work. For until a teacher has a working knowledge of the library materials, she will continue to expect each member of a class of thirty to find material on a subject concerning which the library may have but three or four references.

Another step toward being able to provide sufficient material for the group is to use, in connection with reference assignments, a library form slip. These slips do not need to be complicated ones. They may be a printed form notifying the librarian that on a definite date a group of ..... are going to need material on ..... The work will continue ..... days. All such notices should be in the hands of the librarian three days before the assigned date. This gives her time in which to look for materials and to secure such additional material as is needed from other agencies, such as the public library or the museums.

New methods of teaching are constantly developing and the idea that it is better to have a group of two or three, rather than an entire class, report on a given subject is being accepted widely. To provide for the latter would mean the purchasing of many copies of the same work in order that every child could be occupied in reading the same thing at the same time. This is contrary to modern pedagogical thinking, for it tends to the acceptance of one author's statement as the final truth. The group report from several diverse sources brings the opinion of more than one

authority back to the classroom, and thereby begins the habit of consideration of any statement before its acceptance. This also relieves the library of the necessity of duplicating its reference books to any large extent. And in addition it brings about the socialization and group work which the schools are trying to develop.

It seems almost needless to say that in this problem of providing reference material the librarian herself is the keystone. She must have not only her own collection at her fingers' end but also a working knowledge of the public library collection. And here again is a need for work done on a co-operative basis. And as new material is added to the school library she should go through the books carefully making notes of subject matter which classification and subject entries in the catalog would fail to bring out. To keep, from year to year, bibliographies of the materials gathered together as group requests come in, will be helpful. It will save much of her time and energy not to have to repeat the

hunt when another year the same request comes to the library. Older children assisting in the library gain practice in its use by being taught how to interpret a bibliography and so gather together listed references. A list of special days the school celebrates with the available references is another thing which prevents a last minute rush and failure to have the materials on hand.

A wise librarian will note occasions when the library is unable to meet requests for references on any subject, and place such notes in the suggested purchase file. The new budget may then provide for these wants against future requests.

No librarian can meet every request that comes to her as thoroughly as she might wish to. Library hours do not generally provide for the time she would like to spend in gathering together references, yet with the spirit of co-operation and good will working between the library and the teachers, much may be done towards making what seems to be impossible, possible.

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**A** BOY is in the parlor what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their own merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome.

*Emerson.*

## LITERATURE AS AN APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF CITIZENSHIP

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ONE of the ways of finding out how the qualities that make for good citizenship may be clarified to children is to analyze the experiences which have most helped adults. In attempts to survey the influences that shape a good citizen, we find these influences may be direct and indirect. Probably the influence of what we read as children can be classified as an indirect influence. Certainly literature furnishes one means for explaining conduct qualities in terms of experiences.

Most of us received some impressions from the literature we read as children. We probably *said* little about these impressions. But we tried to do the things which our favorite characters did, and we took rather literally the advice given by the wise and the great. Often we made mistakes in conduct because we were unable to translate the bookish experiences into the experiences of real life around us.

Because of these evidences that literature has an indirect influence, it seems profitable to make a study of ways and means for utilizing stories in teaching the meanings of citizenship. Dr. Charters tells us that when selections are used for instruction in ideals, the teacher should use the selections from that point of view. For instance, after talking over the story, she should help the children translate the story situations into situations which the pupils themselves have met in their everyday experiences. The following shows how such an attempt has been practically worked out with a group of third grade children.

The story to be used was determined by consulting the list of citizenship needs tabu-

lated from the reports of Los Angeles City teachers. The problem of when to speak and when to keep silent ranks high in the list. This problem was selected as one that could be introduced through the use of literature. The fable of "The Talkative Tortoise"\*\* was used.

This is a story of a tortoise who was on very good terms with two ducks. The ducks realized that the tortoise often bored them by talking too much. But still they sometimes found him entertaining.

The home of the ducks—a nearby pond—was drying up. So the ducks planned to fly to a new home. When they told the tortoise, he begged to go with them. They devised the scheme of carrying him on a stick between them. The tortoise was told to hold to the middle of the stick by his mouth while the ducks each carried one end of the stick. The tortoise was sure he could hold on. But, as may be expected, he tried to talk, lost his hold on the stick, and fell to the ground.

In the discussion which followed the telling of the story, the children brought out the fact that the tortoise must have been friendly and interesting, or else the ducks would not have been willing to take him with them. They also remembered that several times during his flight he had kept from talking.

The transition to the children's problem was then made by asking, "If the tortoise were a person what kind of a person would he be?" The children recalled the traits of the tortoise, especially the fact that "he couldn't keep still even when he needed to."

\* Bryant, Sara Cone—*Stories to Tell the Children*—Houghton, Mifflin Co.

This question was then asked, "If we had a boy or girl like the tortoise, how could we help him know when to talk, and when it would be better to keep still?"

The class then listed as the times to talk—  
when your teacher asks questions  
when you have something interesting  
to tell  
when you need to ask an important  
question about your work

The times when one should not talk were listed as—

when the teacher or other pupils are talking  
when it would bother people who are busy  
when it would be discourteous as at an entertainment or in church

The children decided that anyone who could not be courteous in talking and in listening ought to be helped. They gave several suggestions for helping a child and finally decided that teaching him to "take turns" would be best.

This decision implied that he must be given opportunities to talk and the children decided that the Library Club would be a good place in which to practise. Since all wished to have the opportunity of telling about the books which they had read, the "tortoise" would have to learn to take no more than his share of the time. This would mean, as one child said, that he would have to do more thinking before he did his talking. The class also decided that when a member had a question or a contribution, he might indicate this by standing.

After the question of helping each other was put before the Library Club, the next step was to note improvement shown. When the members fell, as did the tortoise, before the habit becomes established, the problem needed further discussion. The class continually attempted to devise new ways of helping each other remember.

The teacher will need to act as guide. She must tactfully remind the children of their purpose in case they forget. She must also see that they maintain the same courtesy at other times. The suggestion of standing to indicate readiness to talk might be encouraged in other activities of the school day.

The teacher ought also to encourage the discussion of actual situations which arise in connection with this problem. The following is an example: John and his mother go to a concert. Two girls sitting behind them talk so much that they cannot enjoy the music. John and his mother have paid their money and wish to hear the concert. What shall they do? Shall they call the usher? Shall they speak to the girls?

The children will have other situations from their own experience.

From such activities, the children's attitudes toward certain demands of society are clarified. They realize that the habits which they are trying to establish are for their best interests. Responsibility for improvement is placed on the group itself.

Thus literature may serve as an approach to the personal problems of the schoolroom.

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**A** BOY is a cross between a poet and a pirate. He is half way between the Stone Age and the Golden Age. He is a scorner of dreams, yet the greatest of dreamers.

*Dr. Atkins, Detroit, Michigan.*

# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

*A DRAMATIZATION  
ARRANGED BY JOHN F. SMITH  
Berea College, Berea, Kentucky*

## Dramatis Personae

CONRAD, the merchant  
ANGELICA, eldest daughter  
BEATRICE, another daughter  
BEAUTY  
THE PRINCE  
VIOLA, queen mother  
DOLORES, a gentlewoman  
PRIEST  
JESTER  
FATIMA, a witch  
SELIM, former partner of the merchant  
ANDREW, another partner

## Stage Equipment

Table  
Two chairs  
Couch  
Two large pots of flowers or ferns  
A huge knife  
Two screens

## ACT I—Scene 1

The Cottage in the Woods

*Enter Angelica and Beatrice*

ANGELICA—Oh, fie upon it all! I'd leave tonight  
If only I could find another home  
Where dust and trash and everlasting chores  
Would be forgotten.

BEATRICE—. . . Yes, and I'd go, too,  
But these eternal rags are all I have  
This side of heaven. Bother all this stuff  
About the joy of poverty and toil!  
There never lived a wench could happy be  
With sweeping and with dusting all the day—  
Except that younger, pretty child of ours  
Whom everyone calls Beauty. Why she'd sing  
And smile if every limb were clothed in air,  
And mouths knew not the taste of food for days.

*Enter Beauty singing "Hark, Hark the Lark"*

ANGELICA—There is she now a-singing with the birds  
And happy as a lark upon the wing.

BEAUTY—How now, sweet sisters, I am just so glad.  
A robin perched upon a swinging limb  
And sang his song. Then came a nightingale  
And piped and piped till sunset filled the skies

And all the world was full of harmony.

Good sisters, tell me why you are so sad?  
This is our home, and here we may enjoy  
The life about us. Nature tells a tale  
Which every ear may hear and gladly, too.  
Come go with me and let us dance and sing  
While sunset makes a heaven of the skies.

*Exit Beauty singing*

ANGELICA—Come go we in, the eventime is here.  
Another night to end another day  
And drive our ship of happiness away.

## ACT I—Scene 2

Viola's palace garden

*Enter Jester*

JESTER—Just give me a cup an' I drink, drink, drink.  
Go show me a pie an' I blink, blink, blink;  
I eat with my feet while my tummy grows round,  
A-sitting by the willow on the cold, cold ground,  
Keeping time  
In a rhyme  
With my chinny-chin-chin,  
A-lickin' off my fingers as I poke the victuals in;  
An' I never do grow sad,  
Though it makes me mighty mad  
A-heapin' up the . . .  
(Sits on a brier) Wow!  
(Picks up brier)

It thrust me through the best friend I've got and  
came out just behind my left ear!  
Why did they ever make briars anyway?  
Or why didn't they dress me up like an  
armadillo?

*Enter Fatima in witch's robe*  
But I must look about me. Someone comes.

FATIMA—I'll have revenge! They cross me every-  
where.  
They starve me, beat me,  
Wrong me, cheat me,  
Were I cooked they'd doubtless eat me.  
Blood! Blood! I must have blood!  
I'll make that gay young laddie rue the day  
He crossed me on that night.  
I'll wink and I'll blink,  
And I'll drink and I'll think,  
An if ever I catch him

His soul will I sink  
Till it . . .

ESTER—Help! Ye gods, send a chariot to help my poor legs!

*Exit, running*

FATIMA—That wretched fool! He'll drive my charms away.

Come, Malkin,  
Come, Paddock,  
Come near me, I pray;  
Come sit on my hand.

(Human voices heard)

Ha, ha, ha, ha!

(Draws a large knife)

There, there he comes. I'll hide me here,  
And as that princeling comes . . .  
(Brandishes knife)

Ha, ha, ha, ha!

*Enter Viola and the Prince*

VIOLA—See yonder rose? Come go we near, my son,  
For there your father loved to stand and gaze  
Across this glorious valley.

THE PRINCE—. . . Mother dear,  
This flower is sweeter for her raven hair.  
Why pluck the red when here's a lovelier hue?  
(They walk away from Fatima who creeps after them. They discover her and flee.  
Fatima makes a charm, walking round and round throwing bits of leaves upon the ground)

FATIMA—Craney crow, Craney crow,  
Come from high and come from low,  
Come and weave a magic spell,  
Come and take a soul to hell.  
Change his face and change his hair,  
Change his body everywhere;  
Make of him a monster vile  
As he steps upon the stile.  
Catch him, Craney, catch him now,  
Catch him while I make a vow.  
Take this herb and haste away;  
Change him ere he gets away.  
*Exit laughing fiendishly*

### ACT I—Scene-3

The cottage in the woods

*Enter Conrad, Beauty, Beatrice, Angelica*

ANGELICA—And father, bring me diamonds. Beatrice  
Would like a string of pearls; but I should like  
A bracelet filled with sparklers rare and pure.

CONRAD—Maychance I cannot bring you all these things,  
But try I shall to see what may be done.  
But here stands Beauty looking pensively  
Upon the earth. Come, Beauty dear, and smile,  
And tell me, dear, what I shall bring to thee.

BEAUTY—I only wish to see my father come  
Safely home again.

CONRAD—. . . That's not enough.

What would my Beauty have me bring her here  
If by good fortune Fate should smile again?  
And Beauty's rags should be exchanged for new?

BEAUTY—Only a rose, dear father; bring me that  
And I shall wear it in my flowing hair  
And love you just the same as if my form  
Were clad in silks and diamonds.

CONRAD—. . . That will I

Do. And when I'm gone I shall remember  
Beauty on the way, and you, too, Beatrice,  
And you, Angelica, with loving heart,  
And hasten home to have your love again.

*Exeunt Conrad, Angelica, Beatrice*

BEAUTY—I cannot think good fortune smiles again.  
But I shall wait and toil and sing and think  
And say I'm happy, so perchance it may.

*Exit*

### ACT II—Scene 1

At the seashore

*Enter Conrad, Selim, Andrew*

SELIM—'Tis true the ship came home, and richly laden;  
But then, you see, your debts were over us,  
And we must meet the world with smiles again.  
Thus by the law we did appropriate  
The goods unto ourselves to clear our name  
And give us standing with our creditors.

CONRAD—But where's my share? A part of this  
was mine;  
And by the law it should be thrice divided  
Instead of cut in twain.

ANDREW—. . . But what is done  
Can scarcely be unraveled; for you see,  
Our creditors would challenge us the act  
And we should suffer were it otherwise.

SELIM—Bear the loss. Perhaps another ship  
More precious than the first may come to port,  
And then your share will come. Till then,  
farewell,  
And take this to requite you for your pain.  
(Gives him money)

T'will take you home again.

CONRAD—

Farewell.

ANDREW—

Farewell.

*Exeunt*

### ACT II—Scene 2

The palace of the Beast

*Enter Conrad*

CONRAD—'Tis bitter cold, and that fierce howling  
storm

Hath hidden all the paths. I'll look within;  
Perchance the keeper may be found anon  
And may befriend a traveler on his way.

(He wanders about the place but finds no one.)

He sits on the couch and falls asleep. A table with food is placed before him. He awakes, eats the food and falls to sleep again.

The night passes. When he awakes more food is ready before him. He eats it and makes ready to depart)

I'll go bring forth my steed, and ere the sun  
Hath traveled o'er the heavens once again  
I'll see my Beauty and her sisters, too.  
(He walks into the garden between flowers)  
Ah, here's a rose! I promised Beauty one.  
And I must not forget her. This will do.

*Enters the Beast, angrily*

BEAST—How comes it, sir, that having found a bed  
And food within my walls you ruin my garden?  
Here you pluck a flower! Is't not enough  
That you should share my board and be allowed  
To go in peace? Good sir, this cannot be.  
The penalty is death! And you shall find  
The awful retribution swiftly come.

CONRAD—I pray, good Beast, your mercy. 'Twas to pay  
A promise which I made to Beauty dear,  
My youngest daughter. When I came away  
My daughters made request what I should bring.  
One wanted silks, and one for diamonds asked;  
But Beauty, loving father more than they,  
Asked only for a rose. And that's the cause  
Why I have plucked your flower.

BEAST—. . . But you see,  
The penalty must follow just the same  
Except one thing be done: If when you go  
Unto your home again one daughter there  
Will come to live with me and share my home  
I'll give you freedom. So you may depart;  
But if a daughter fail to take your place  
You must return and pay the penalty.

*Exit Beast*

CONRAD—I'll go. But farewell, joy, forevermore.  
I'll see my daughters, bid them all aday,  
And pay the price a father's love must pay.

*Exit*

### ACT II—Scene 3

Viola's palace garden

Fatima in hiding

*Enters the Jester*

ESTER—Heigh ho, heigh ho,  
Crack my heels and shake my toe,

Feed my tummy with a spoon,  
Hunt for doughnuts on the moon,  
Roll my eyes and tear my hair,  
Kick my heels into the air,  
Kill a witch and broil her, too,  
Make a drink of morning dew,  
Roast a cat and . . .

Holy monkeys!

Send me wings; my legs forget to go!  
Run, legs, run; don't while away the time!

(Leaps up and down. Fatima approaches,  
holding Jester with a spell)

FATIMA—Ha, ha, ha, ha!

ESTER—(Leaping frantically) Run, legs! Wake up,  
feet!

Wiggle, toes, and for God's sake get me away  
from here!

FATIMA—Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Yes, I have you now!  
(Draws huge knife and approaches close.  
Punches Jester with her finger. Jester  
grows desperate)

ESTER—(Falling on his knees as Fatima stands  
brandishing knife)

Most holy witch; good witch; nice and lovely  
creature; if ever I had a tongue I'd wiggle  
it right now, and tell you to please go straight  
back to hell and let me go home. But my  
tongue won't wiggle, and my legs won't wiggle,  
and my toes won't wiggle, but holy monkeys!  
I do, but it don't get me nowhere!

Give me an eagle's wing or the tail of a kite or  
one poor turkey feather and I'll fly into day-  
after-tomorrow!

*Exit Jester running in circles. Fatima following*

### ACT II—Scene 4

The cottage in the woods

*Enter Angelica and Beatrice*

BEATRICE—He brought us nothing! That is how it  
goes

With sweeping and with dusting every day  
And wearing out our lives with drudgery!

ANGELICA—And this young sister brings us greater  
woe

With her simplicity. One never knows  
What silly, simple, sensible request  
She's going to make.

BEATRICE—. . . I cannot understand  
How she can be so happy here while we  
Born of the selfsame mother find no joy.

*Enter Beauty and Conrad*

BEAUTY—Why father, it is I who am to blame,  
And I shall bear this burden willingly.  
I'll to the Beast and pray him let you go  
To be a comfort to my sisters here.

CONRAD—My gentle dove, I cannot have you go  
To suffer for the wrong that I have done.  
I'd rather die than have my Beauty harmed.

BEAUTY—But father, maybe he will gentle grow  
If I but stroke his cheek. One never knows  
What gentleness a beast will manifest  
In answer to a kindness.

CONRAD—. . . Then away,  
We'll go tomorrow, come whatever may.  
*Exeunt*

### ACT III—Scene 1

The Beast's palace garden

*Enters Beauty searching for Beast*

BEAUTY—Whither could he have gone? I've hunted  
here

And there and all about me. Now I fear  
I've hurt his gentle feelings by some word,  
Or else I tarried but a day too long,  
And he hath fled these grounds to mourn for me.

(She hears a deep groan)

There's something there out just beyond that  
rose.

I'll steal a step and peep beyond the leaves  
To see who sickens on this moonlit eve.

Oh, 'tis the Beast! Poor fellow; see him there  
With life fast going! I'll not let him die  
For love. I love him and I'll tell him so.

(She kneels over Beast and kisses him.  
Beast looks up and speaks)

BEAST—'Tis your cold heart. I cannot bear to stay  
Where no one loves me in this cruel world.

BEAUTY—But Beast, I love you. I'll not let you die.  
Come get you up, and I shall be your wife  
To make you happy in your palace here.

(Shouting and singing and music all about  
the place. The Beast throws off his en-  
chantment and leaps to his feet a hand-

some young prince. He greets Beauty in  
loving fashion)

*Exeunt arm in arm*

### ACT III—Scene 2

The Prince's Palace

*Enter Viola, Dolores, Conrad, Angelica,  
Beatrice, the Jester, and take position for  
the wedding.*

ESTER—Bring me a cup, a cup, a cup, I say,  
And let me drink a-drink their health today.

VIOLA—Be silent, gentle fool; this is no time  
To vaunt your feelings in a silly ryhme.

DOLORES—(To Conrad)

My good sir, our hearts sing joyously  
Because your wondrous Beauty with her charms  
Hath broke this spell.

CONRAD—. . . 'Tis mete we all should feel  
Most happy that the sun hath shone again.

*Enters the Priest*

Music

*Enter Beauty and the Prince and take  
position before the Priest*

PRIEST—The vows were all recorded ere you came.  
Let those whom Providence hath thus decreed  
To love and dwell together e'en as one  
Be ever faithful to their sacred vows.  
And will these witnesses bespeak their joy  
And bless the pair who on this happy morn  
Enter a union evermore to live  
In heavenly joy and happiness supreme.

ESTER—Some men are born to marry, some achieve  
marriage, but more than you'd suppose have  
marriage thrust upon them.

*Exit Jester on all-fours*

*Exeunt all as music is played*

## EDITORIALS

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### THREE TO MAKE READY

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THE CRITICISM is made that English teachers are vague and indefinite in their work. They are charged with ineffectiveness. There is too much indefiniteness in their teaching as to outcomes and results desired; there is too little consciousness of reality. Too often, neither teacher nor child knows whither he is bound. Neither the one nor the other works directly toward any great experience convincingly worthwhile. The way remains uncharted; drifting and grouping necessarily follow.

Children like to have a plan; they like to go through preliminaries that relate to definite outcomes; they enjoy setting up rules that make the game sharp and fast. More of the spirit of childhood's "Three to make ready" is needed in teaching. Outcomes must be brought nearer to hand, and the child's method of direct attack utilized.

Perhaps teachers would do better if they recognized that children do not change into adults, that they grow into adults. Objectives should be so arranged that they determine the lines along which the growth takes place.

A child learns to lace his shoes not by measuring the length of the strings, or by counting the number of eyelets to be laced, but by doing the things that mean laced shoes, by going through these activities persistently, by associating his acts with the satisfaction of having shoes neatly fastened to his feet.

So it is with countless other matters. The child makes his way through the world doing, acting, living through the experiences of the day. He learns to wash his face by the actual experience, by washing it himself; he learns

cleanliness this way. To analyze soapsuds, to measure wash cloths, to record the temperature of water will not make him clean—will not teach him to wash his face habitually.

"One for the money," says the rhyme, "Two for the show." "Three to make ready," says the child "and four to go." His program is one of vigorous action, of vivid experience. No thumbing of the pages in a tentative way for him; it is the heart of the story that he is after—it is the reading that makes him feel and think—*now*. He is a creature of action, and there is a consecutiveness always in his acts—providing, of course, that the show is on, about to start,—or that he is going somewhere.

There is a place in school for more language activities under conditions of group life—conversation, talks, speeches, written plans, letters, reports—each in its own proper social setting.

There is need in the classroom for experiences so vital in character, so forceful in meaning as to grip the child's attention. The stream of consciousness flows rightly when the trend of experience is strong and irresistible. The child never fails to take his cue from really life-like situations—whether in talking, reading, or writing. "All the world's a stage." The child's is the star role. The place of the teacher is back of the scenes, or perhaps in the box office.

"One for the money," says the teacher—  
"Two for the show."  
"Three to make ready," says the child—  
"And four to go."

## REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

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**THE GIRL WHO SAT BY THE ASHES.** By Padraic Colum. New York, Macmillan.

The story of *The Girl Who Sat By The Ashes* is a delightful addition to children's literature. It is a new and lengthened version of one of the oldest and most favored of fairy tales. *The Girl Who Sat By The Ashes* calls herself Maid-Alone; to her step-mother and step-sisters she is Girl-Go-With-The-Goats; but to us, she is none other than our beloved Cinderella.

From a large number of variants of the old story, Mr. Colum has chosen some of the most interesting versions, and has cleverly woven them together, creating from the old, a new and charming story. There is a quaintness and a picturesque charm about the tale. Over each new incident is thrown a magic spell. The sympathetic, helpful, little starlings, the goats that caused Maid-Alone such trouble, the wise geese, and the Woman-of-a-Hundred-Years all give a wholesome satisfaction to the child's longing for the fantastic. The little starlings befriend and aid Maid-Alone when she is in the hands of the giant. As a goose-herd for the king, the wise geese recognize her worth and beauty. The Woman-of-a-Hundred-Years is the fairy queen who guards and protects her. After a long search, the prince finds the Matchless-Maiden to be our Maid-Alone, and she becomes his princess.

The story is well adapted to the interests and abilities of children of the third grade, but will be read and enjoyed by older children also.

RACHEL S. SHEPHERD

**UNDER THE STORY TREE.** By Mabel Guinnip La Rue. New York, Macmillan, 1924.

*Under the Story Tree*, by Mabel Guinnip La Rue, is a supplement to *The F-U-N Book*. The book contains sixteen stories, similar in theme to most of our primary literature, but told in a superior style. Many of the characters are old acquaintances, who are greeted with pleasure by children. Several of the stories are factual or informational. For example, Pinkie, Winkie and Peter leave cans in their backyard. A mosquito, finding one of these half-full of water, decided it is just the place to lay her eggs. The results furnish an intensely interesting narrative.

The vocabulary of the book contains about 700 words. When checked by E. L. Thorndike's "The Teacher's Word Book" it was found that eighty-two per cent are included in Mr. Thorndike's list of the three thousand most used words.

The book is particularly well illustrated by Maude and Miska Petersham. A child could not help liking these pictures. The print is a good size for beginners, and the paragraphing is unusually well spaced.

LOUISE HARRISON

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## AMONG THE PUBLISHERS

**CHILDHOOD'S FEARS.** By G. F. Morton, New York, Macmillan.

**CHILDREN'S READING.** By Lewis M. Terman and Margaret Lima. New York, Appleton.

**CHIMNEY CORNER STORIES.** By Veronica S. Hutchison. Illustrated by Lois Lenski. New York, Milton Balch.

**THE NEW TECHNIQUE OF TEACHING PRIMARY READING.** Chicago, Wheeler Pub. Co.

**ONE-ACT PLAYS FOR YOUNG FOLKS.** Edited by M. A. Jagendorf. Illustrated by James Shute. New York, Brentano's.

**A PARENT'S GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S READING.** By Mary Graham Bonner. New York, Funk and Wagnalls.

**TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ.** By Paul Klapper. New York, Appleton.

**365 BEDTIME STORIES.** By Mary Graham Bonner. Illustrated by Florence Choate and Elizabeth Curtis. New York, Stokes.

**TWENTY SONGS FOR CHILDREN.** By Earl Victor Prahl. Illustrated by Milton Newman. Teachers College, Columbia University. New York.

**THE WAY OF THE WILD.** By Herbert Ravenel Sass. Illustrated by Charles Livingston Bull. New York, Milton Balch.

## FROM THE PERIODICALS

**THE SOCIAL BASIS OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**—The *development of an efficient individual* is giving way to the *development of a member of society* as an aim in education. The school must strike a balance between the old idea of education for earning a living, and education for living. "Many a man has the ability to make money, but it is not everyone who is able to use his wealth to his own advantage." This task—the education for profitable use of leisure, falls upon the school—the social agent which has taken over many of the functions of the church and home. Character is developed through the group relationships furnished by the school. The school is particularly rich in such social relationships. School organizations, under the guidance of teachers, offer rich substitutes for cheap and harmful amusement. School organizations and group activities offer real life situations in place of the artificiality of the traditional school. Normal schools should offer training in the guidance of student activities.—A. E. Holch, *Education*, January, 1926. Page 290.

**THE NEGATIVE SUGGESTION EFFECT OF TRUE-FALSE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS**—The common objection to true-false tests—that they bring forward negative concepts—is here submitted to scientific experiment. Two similar groups were given reading material. Group I was given a true-false test; group II, a recall test. Four weeks later, the order was reversed, and group II took the true-false test while the first group was given a recall examination. Results showed that the true-false form seemed to favor delayed recall slightly. There was no evidence of a negative carry-over from the true-false examination. The authors suggest that the critical attitude fostered by a true-false examination is rather desirable.—H. H. Remmers and Edna M. Remmers, *Journal of Educational Psychology*. January 1926. Page 52.

**NUMBER NEEDS IN CHILDREN'S READING ACTIVITIES**—The purpose of the study was to discover the "number situations met by children in their reading." The

text books used from the third grade through the sixth were studied, and all arithmetical and mathematical terms listed. In addition to the text-books, one issue of each of ten magazines most popular in the children's homes was surveyed. The items thus obtained were classified. Time, thermometer readings, serial numbers, and money were among the classes. "On the teacher of elementary school children . . . there is placed the responsibility of providing opportunities for experiences that shall leave definite concepts in the child's possession." The desire to relate mathematics more closely to life situations, and the means of accomplishing this—through the survey of reading materials—is of interest to a teacher of English.—Clara Martin Partridge. *Elementary School Journal*. January, 1926. Page 357.

**A. A. MILNE**—"It is still sometimes taken for granted by very fierce students of letters that there are more intimations of literary quality in a heavy foot than in a light heart. But most of us, as we grow up, put less trust in mere solemnity . . . and are prepared to find wisdom in a jest." So the author begins a critique of A. A. Milne. Mr. Milne's literary career is sketched, and his articles written for "Punch," his plays, his popular "When We Were Very Young," and his new "Gallery for Children" are estimated. Reprinted from the *Bookman* (London) December, 1925.—*The Living Age*. January 1926. Page 197.

**SCIENTIFIC SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR THE SCHOOL LIBRARY**—"The Winnetka Graded Book List" was prepared from children's ballots on the books they read. Each child's reading score (The Stanford Silent Reading Test) was placed on his ballots, and the child was asked to state why he liked, or disliked the book. A typical comment by a child follows each title in the list.—Carleton Washburne and Mabel Vogel. *Educational Administration and Supervision*. January, 1926. Page 14.

## SHOP TALK

### ESSENTIALS IN GRAMMAR

Mr C. C. Certain, Detroit, Michigan. Jan. 19, 1926.

Dear Sir:

I should be very glad to read a discussion of the following in some issue of THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW.

Some technical grammar *must* be taught. What should constitute minimum essentials in the eighth grade? In the seventh?

Thank you.

A. R. G.

THIS inquiry has been received from a subscriber. What grammar specifically should be taught in grades seven and eight, and in other grades?

The answer is best given by pointing to several different studies made in recent years on the subject of technical grammar, and to committee reports bearing upon the problem of minimum essentials in grammar.

In his "Composition as a Social Problem," Mr. Leonard insists that no more formal grammar should be required than can be mastered thoroughly by the pupils. The requirements should be based upon absolute essentials, and the aim should be "one hundred per cent accomplishment." This aim seems possible.

Investigations have shown repeatedly that children's speech errors result from relatively few bad habits of grammar. By attacking definitely, systematically, four or five characteristic errors in each grade, the correction of bad habits should be accomplished.

MANY recent courses of study outline essentials in grammar by grades. Helpful suggestions may be secured from these.

In the curriculum for elementary schools, published by the Department of Education of Minnesota, the study of grammar is not prescribed below the eighth grade. The bulletin on the curriculum states, "Familiarity with the names and simple uses of the parts of

\* S. A. Leonard—Composition as a Social Problem—Houghton Mifflin

speech may be developed incidentally in connection with the correction of errors in oral and written English. If the use of grammatical terms is carefully introduced in this way, a good motive will be furnished for the study of functional grammar later in the eighth grade and high school." The essentials of grammar, as offered in the eighth grade, are definitely outlined in this curriculum. The basis upon which these essentials were determined is expressed by Dr. J. F. Hoscic.\*

"In general, the grammar worth teaching is the grammar of use—function in the sentence—and the grammar to be passed over is the grammar of classification—pigeonholing by definition." The essentials of grammar, as offered in the eighth grade, are definitely outlined in this curriculum.

The Educational Bulletin of the State of New Jersey, May, 1925, suggests minimum essentials in English, including grammar, for each grade as far as the eighth. In this course of study, grammar is offered in more detail and is introduced in the fifth grade. Partial requirements for the seventh grade are: recognition of the kinds of sentences—declarative, interrogative, exclamatory; nouns—common and proper, singular and plural, and the possessive forms; the uses of nouns—subject and direct object of verbs, and object of prepositions, predicate nouns; the proper forms of pronouns as subject of verbs, predicate pronoun, object, agreement of pronoun with antecedent. Verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and word phrase and clause modifiers, are also studied in some detail.

However, the general tendency in these courses of study, seems to be away from such decided emphasis upon formal grammar. The attitude of many progressive makers of cur-

\* Reorganization of English in Secondary Schools

ricula is that less should be attempted, and more accomplished.

The Course of Study in English, Grades VII to XII for the Des Moines Public Schools gives as minimum essentials in grammar, in grade VII B "(1) Ability to distinguish between groups of words that are not sentences, and sentences. (2) Ability to recognize in the sentence its principal parts,—subject and predicate. (3) Recognition of simple subject and verb."

The Course of Study for grade VII A provides for the teaching of the kinds of nouns (common, proper, abstract); pronouns, their meaning, and the nominative and accusative forms; avoidance of both noun and pronoun as subject; the singular and plural of nouns and pronouns; the singular and plural of verb forms; agreement in number between subject and verb, and between pronoun and antecedent.

The grammar course for the eighth grade is stated with equal definiteness. No formal grammar is offered below the seventh grade.

Inasmuch as the Des Moines course states maximum requirements as well as minimum essentials, it is particularly valuable. Like the Minnesota course, it emphasizes functional grammar, giving particular attention to common errors of speech, for example, the disagreement of verb and subject, and the duplication of the noun and pronoun as subject.

Essentials, as set forth in the English course of the University of Wisconsin Extension Division\* include: the possessive forms, singular and plural, of nouns and pronouns, verb agreement, pronoun agreement, correct objective form of the pronouns, and the forms of the verb "lie."

The article entitled "Tentative Sixth Grade English Plans" by Miss Katherine Stevenson, on page 47 of this number of THE REVIEW,

\* Course 4-A of the Correspondence Study Department of the University of Wisconsin, contains as a supplement "A Minimum Grammar." This may be obtained from the University Extension Division Correspondence Study Department, University of Wisconsin, by ordering Assignment 12, Requirements in Grammar.

contains suggestions which should be helpful in determining minimum essentials in grammar.

#### THE REVIEW MAKES FRIENDS

THE accompanying letters from the state departments of education of Indiana and of New York tell why THE REVIEW is making friends among teachers and school administrators.

State of Indiana Department of Public Instruction Henry Noble Sherwood, Superintendent, Indianapolis

Mr. C. C. Certain, January 14, 1926  
Editor, THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW,  
6505 Grand River Avenue, Detroit Michigan.

Dear Mr. Certain:

A reply to your letter of November 25 has been delayed because urgent office affairs have made it impossible for me to examine a copy of THE REVIEW earlier.

I am very much pleased with the magazine. I find that it is a high-class periodical, containing material in which teachers of elementary school English should be vitally interested. The material is fresh, pedagogically sound, and to my mind there are few teachers of English in our elementary schools to whom this magazine would not be distinctly worth-while.

The list of contributors to the magazine contains names which carry considerable prestige with any group of educators. The Board of Advisers contains names which should guarantee that the magazine will always be a high-class production under the present management. I believe they would give both inspiration and valuable knowledge to the teacher.

I should strongly recommend THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW to all teachers interested in this field.

Very truly yours,  
Henry Noble Sherwood,  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The University of the State of New York The State Department of Education Albany

Mr. C. C. Certain, Editor, December 15, 1925.  
ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW,  
6505 Grand River Avenue, Detroit, Mich.

Dear Sir:

Answering your inquiry of recent date to this Department relative to THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW I am pleased to advise you that a journal of this type devoted to the interests of elementary English teachers seems very properly to have a definite place in the educational field. The copies of THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW which have come to my notice have been well edited and should prove very helpful to all teachers of English who are working in the elementary field.

Very truly yours,  
Geo. M. Wiley,  
Assistant Commissioner for Elementary Education.